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PERSONALITIES

TWENTY-FOUR DRAWINGS BY

EDMOND X. KAPP

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PERSONALITIES

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PERSONALITIES

TWENTY-FOUR DRAWINGS BY

EDMOND X. KAPP

CORNELL UNIVERSITY ARCHIVE
IMAGE BY

NEW YORK
ROBERT M. McBRIDE & Co.
1920

FIRSTLINGS:

TO

MY MOTHER & FATHER

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

There is no need for an introduction to Mr. Kapp's work; this was effected by the exhibition of his drawings at The Little Art Rooms, in Duke Street, Adelphi, during May-June, 1919. *The impression made by that exhibition, on those qualified to judge, will be found recorded in the pages at the end of this book. There were those, however, who, without being professional judges, formed similar opinions; and not all who would have liked to acquire a particular drawing were able to do so. It is to meet the request for a representative selection that these twenty-four drawings are published.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I CANNOT issue this book without expressing my gratitude to Mr. Max Beerbohm. His generous encouragement gave me confidence to hold an exhibition of my drawings, but for which the present volume would not have taken shape.

§ My thanks are due to the owners of several of the original drawings for having placed no obstacle in the way of reproduction and to the owners of a few copyrights—the Editors of the "Tatler" and the "Bystander"—for a similar courtesy.

§ A number of these drawings were first reproduced in the pages of Mr. R. A. Scott-James's and Mr. Arnold Palmer's now defunct "New Weekly." Every one who knew this happy paper regrets its early death at the outbreak of war, and looks forward to its revival.

E. X. K.

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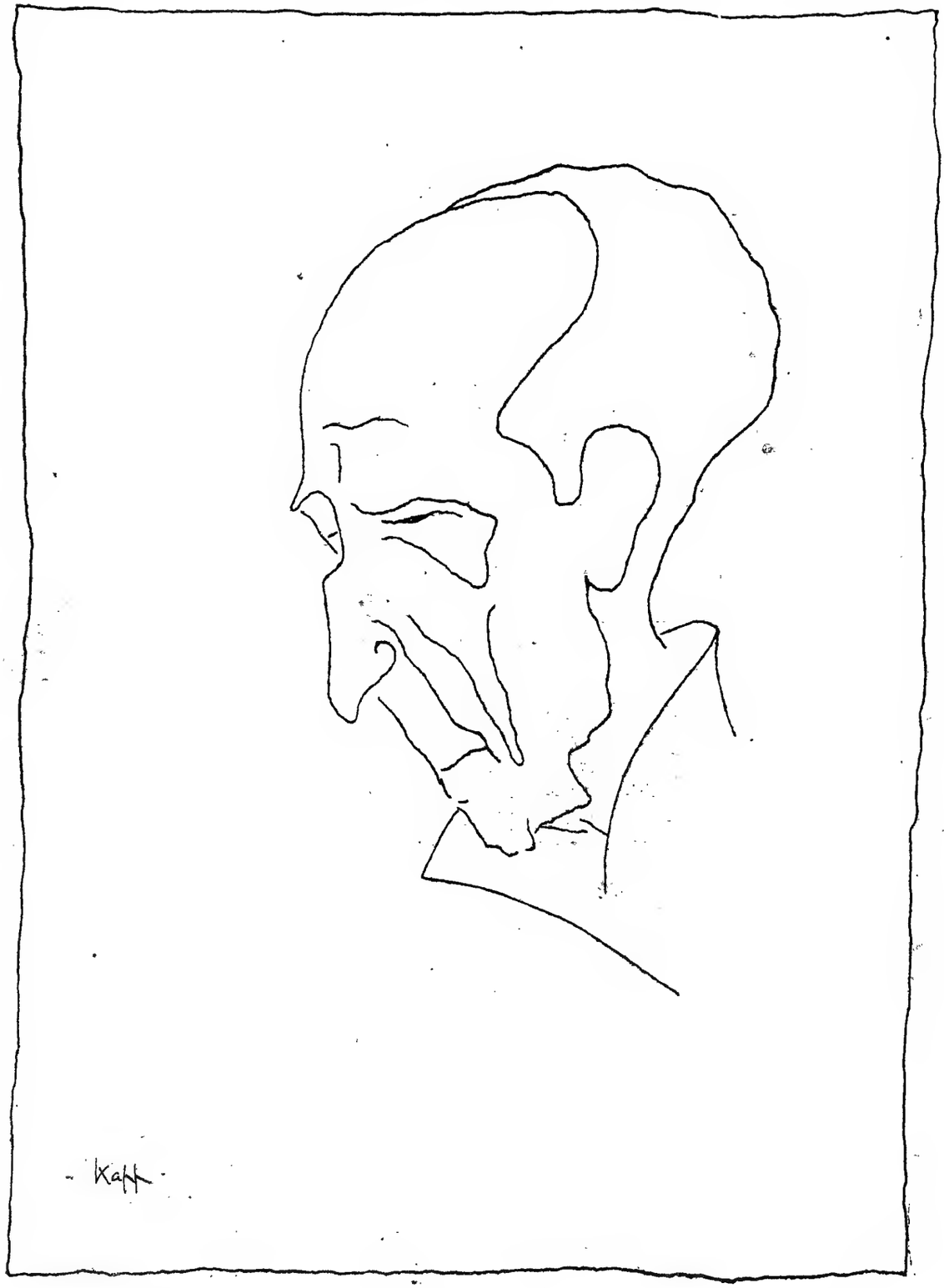
PERSONALITIES

1

SEER OF VISIONS
(*YONÉ NOGUCHI*
Japanese Poet)

2

VISCOUNT MORLEY



3

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

1914

4
JOHN MASEFIELD

KaH

5

THE POLITICIAN

(RT. HON. C. F. G. MASTERMAN)

ED. XMAS KAPP.
4d
1914

6

G. K. CHESTERTON

as he would have us think him

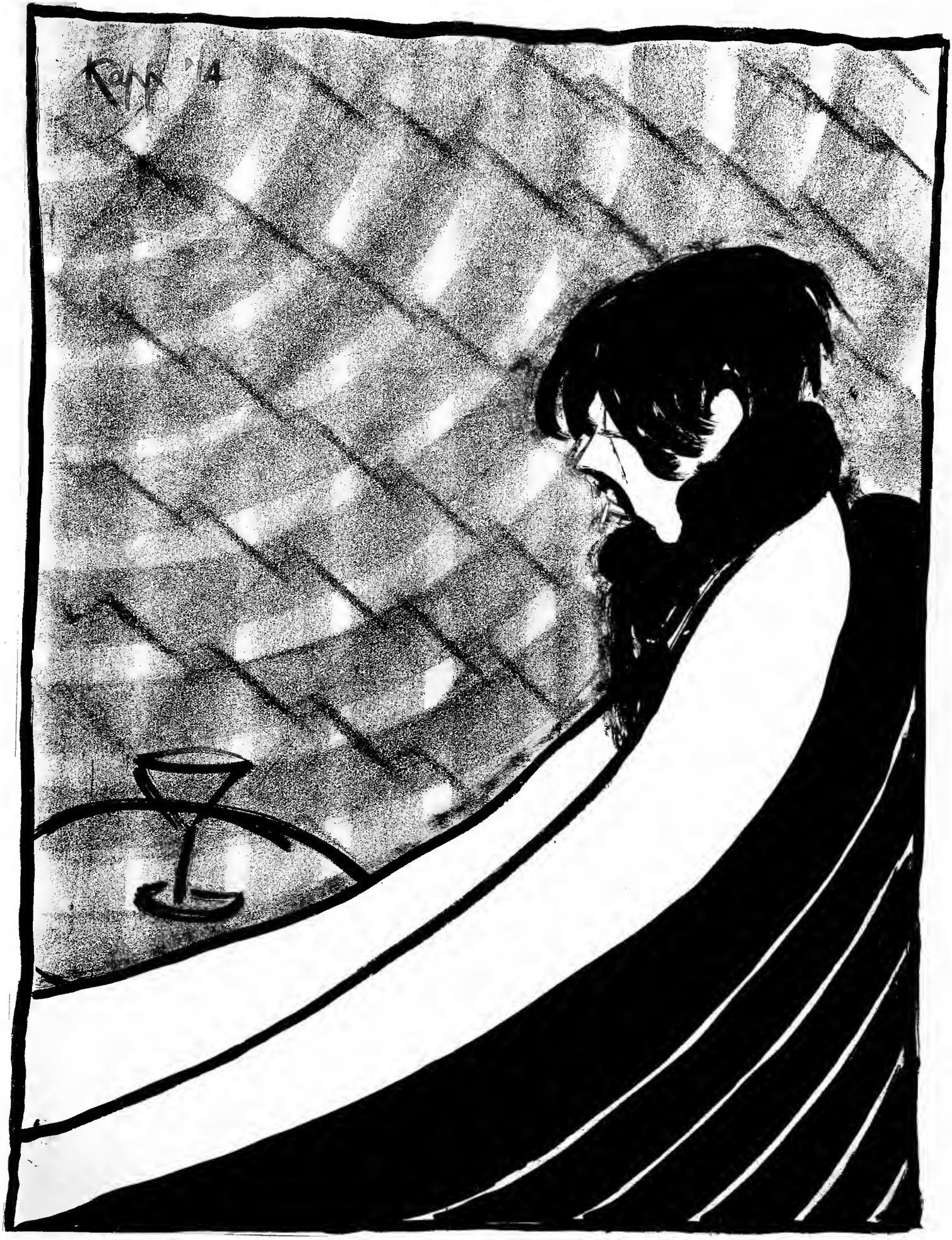
7

AUGUSTUS JOHN

Kamp '17

8

WYNDHAM LEWIS
(1914)


Kahn '14

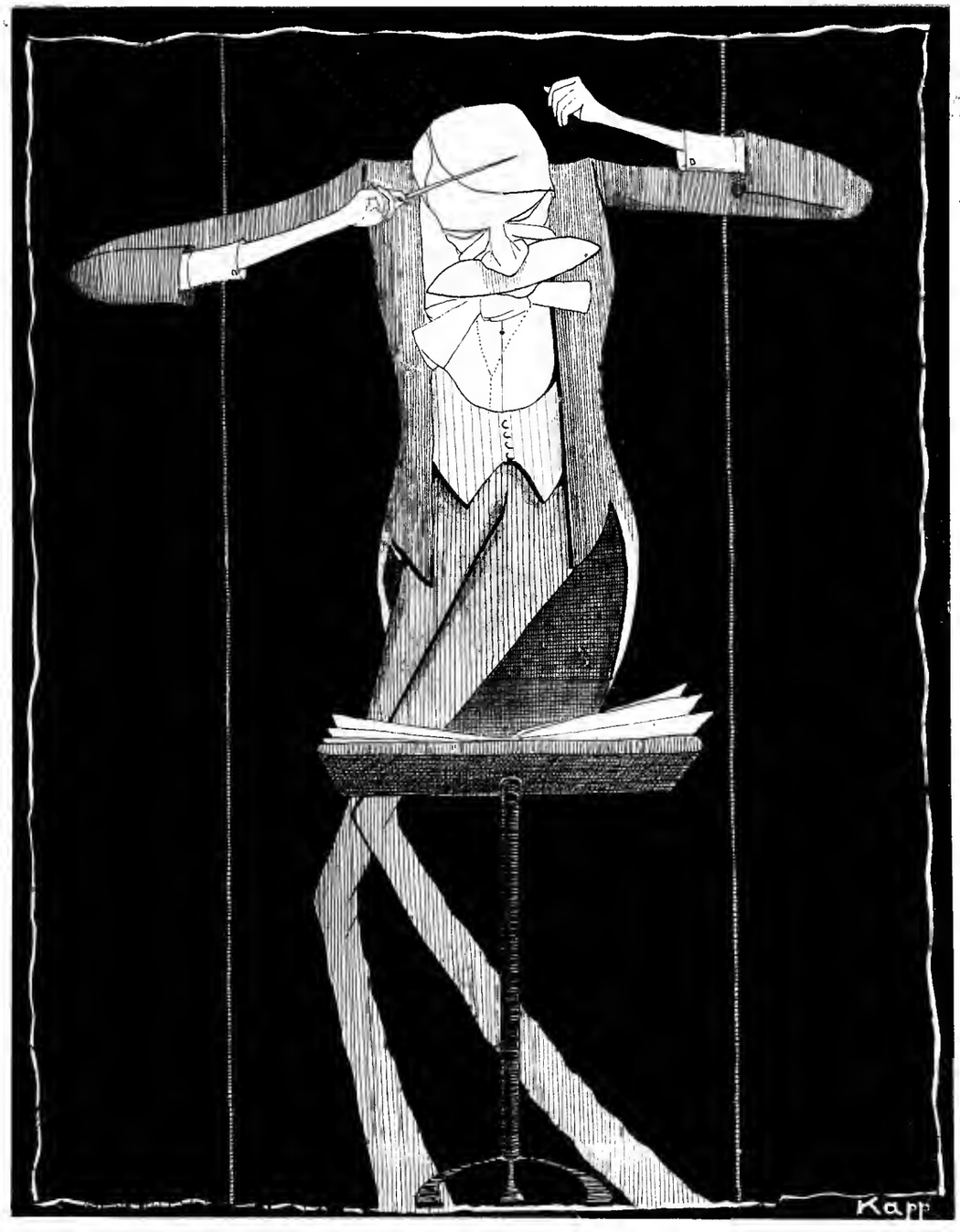
9

JACOB EPSTEIN

Kapp '14.

10

SIR EDWARD ELGAR


Kapp

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THE GOLDEN THREAD
(*SIR HENRY WOOD*)

12

SIR THOMAS BEECHAM

13

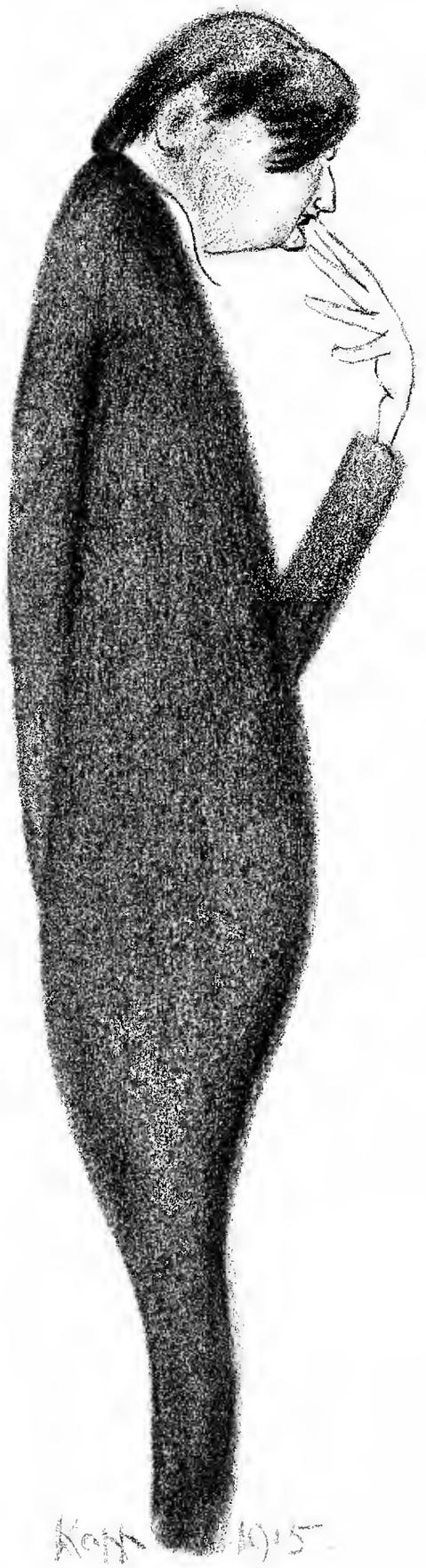
LANDON RONALD

Kabb.13

14

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

listening to his own music



15

SIR CHARLES VILLIERS STANFORD

Kaff '14.

16
SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE

Kath '19

17

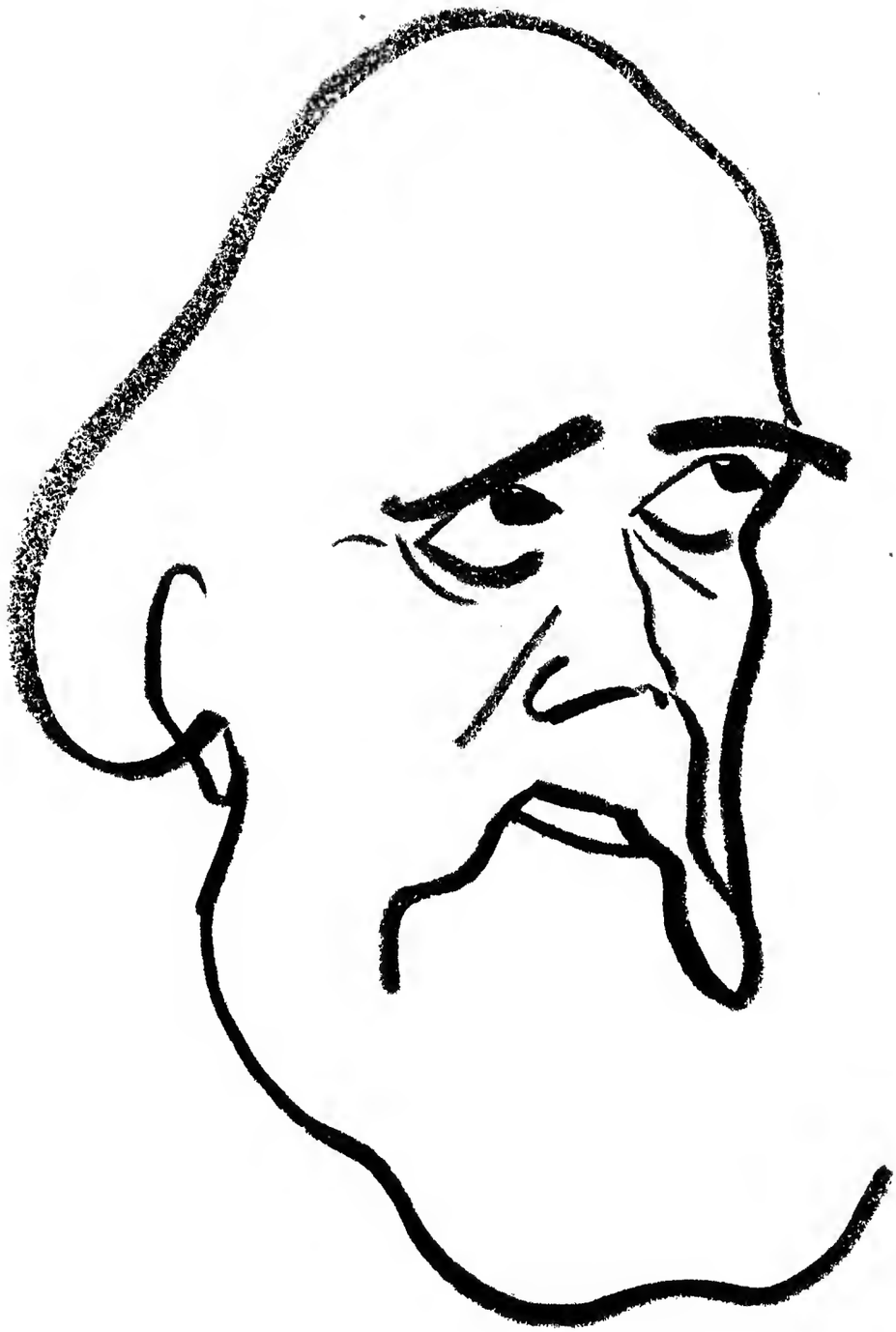
THE BISHOP
(*THE BISHOP OF NORWICH*)

Kaff '14

18

SIR OLIVER LODGE

seeking a fourth dimension or something



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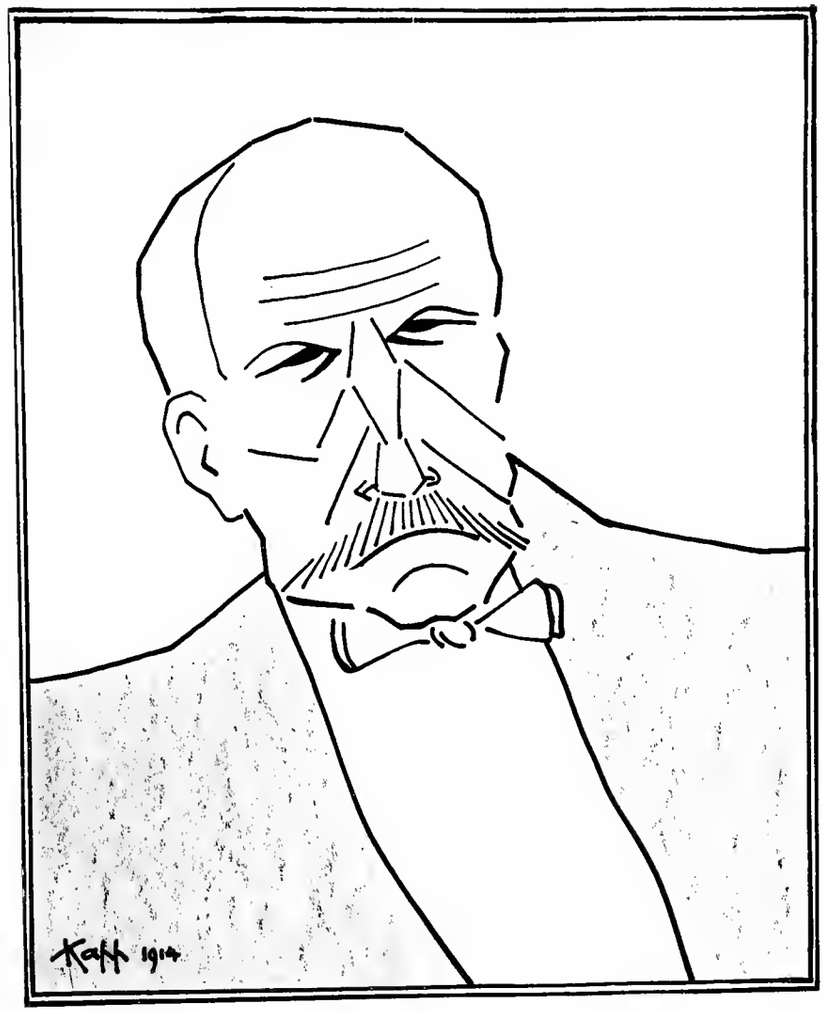
THE LATE PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

20

VISCOUNT MILNER


Kaff 1914

21

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE

Kath '14

22

NORMAN ANGELL

23

THE ANTI-SUFFRAGIST
(*MR. REGINALD McKENNA*)

24
MRS. GRUNDY

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EXTRACTS *from the* OPINIONS *of the* CRITICS

MR. SIDNEY C. COCKERELL (Curator of the Fitzwilliam Museum) in the "Cambridge Magazine" (1914)

"Max Beerbohm's drawings are the result of astonishing insight and observation; his wit is keen and almost unerring in its aim. In Mr. Kapp he has a follower of whom he has every reason to be proud.... In all these studies there is talent of a high order, and as to Mr. Kapp's ultimate reputation as a caricaturist there can be no doubt whatever."

MR. MAX BEERBOHM (in a letter, reproduced by permission)

"DEAR EDMOND KAPP,—I am glad you are going to show to everybody the drawings you so kindly showed to me. If people in general rate your sense of design and your grasp of form, and your humour and fantasy, half so high as I in particular rate them, then, depend on it, your exhibition will be a very great success indeed.

"Admiringly (and not envyingly, I hope, but—'what man beholdeth his own heart?')—yours, MAX BEERBOHM."

MR. LAURENCE BINYON in the "New Statesman"

"....Kapp is a welcome accession to the too small group of caricaturists of distinction that we have.... He is an artist; he has imagination. A drawing called 'The Anti-Suffragist' is typical of his method; it has a curious cold intensity; the deformation or transformation of actual features being wrought in the mind rather than on the paper, and with more appeal to imagination than to sense of humour...."

SIR CLAUDE PHILLIPS in the "Daily Telegraph." "A New Caricaturist"

"A brilliant and stimulating little exhibition of drawings and caricatures . . . (presented) with a certain ruth lessness, yet without anything approaching spite or meanness . . . a small but by no means unimportant show. . . . Captain Kapp is a brilliant draughtsman, intensely modern in style.... This bold and expressive draughtsmanship.... "Of rare subtlety, is the portrait-study 'Seer of Visions' (Yoné Noguchi).... Nothing short of masterly is the chalk drawing 'George Bernard Shaw'...."

"Here is an exhibition which should appeal not only to the lovers of brilliant draughtsmanship, but to those—and they are the greater number—who appreciate audacious and penetrating characterisation. We shall look forward with the greatest interest to the further development of Captain Kapp's remarkable talent."

MR. CECIL ROBERTS in the "Liverpool Post"

"....There is a kindly extravagance pervading these striking works. Like the triumphs of Max Beerbohm himself, they make persons more charming because of their frailties. Captain Kapp is masterly in the economy of his line.... But he does more than follow the poetry of line; he interprets the character in a curve, and reads from a twist of the arm or a bend of the neck as much as a phrenologist from a bump on the brow. One laughs therefore, and grows wiser. What does invite the serious mood is the fact that even when most the humorist Captain Kapp is most the artist. His personalities, like Wild's and Whistler's, will endure because they are unique and arise from artistic points of view."

MR. ROBERT DERRIMAN in the "New Witness"

"...the chronicle of his vision shows him to be endowed with essential but rare gifts for the expression of his art.... As a draughtsman he is very interesting, chiefly by reason of his freedom; for although a certain personal caligraphy stamps all his work, he is never the slave to one manner.

"... It requires a careful study ... to realise the range and power of this talented artist."

MR. R. W. FLETCHER in "Everyman"

"... What is more than anything else remarkable about these drawings is the variety of methods that Captain Kapp seems able to command at will. Some of these drawings are caricatures in the ordinary sense, only a little subtler and better drawn than those we are accustomed to.... Some again are a sheer joy from the beauty of their design. There is a drawing called 'Decoration in Black and White' that is unforgettable, and a 'Lord Morley' drawn in a very few delicate lines that perfectly express the austere beauty of the face. Best of all, perhaps (is).... 'Seer of Visions' (Yoné Noguchi), a face that one could live with, and only grow to be fonder of, subtle, mysteriously quiet, and wonderfully drawn....

"It is impossible to give more than a suggestion of how good this exhibition is ... (to) ... anyone who is capable of understanding that caricature can be a serious branch of art and no mere playing the fool or spitefulness...."

MR. CHARLES MARRIOTT in the "Evening Standard"

"... 'Kapp' caricatures the whole personality of his victim and not merely the accidents of his appearance. His drawing of Rudyard Kipling is an almost uncanny revelation of certain qualities in the work of that writer that are not generally recognised.

"In the portraits of musicians, again, there is much more than a recognition of mannerisms; they amount to critical comments on the musical tasks and powers of the subjects."

In "Colour"

"'Seer of Visions' is a 'portrait' in a deeper sense than is generally understood by the word, because it is an attempt to draw the personality of the subject rather than the facts of his appearance. It is an example of truth as distinct from accuracy."

MR. LOUIS GOLDING in "Voices"

"Kapp's exhibition of 'personalities' (he would repudiate the facile category of 'caricature') leaves him much the most interesting of the craftsmen in his art...."

MR. J. B. MANSON in the "Studio"

"Mr. Edmond X. Kapp is commonly called a caricaturist. I would rather describe him as a sort of *distillateur* of the perfume of personality.... He has, it would seem by nature, a right of entry into the minds of certain people; he reveals what he finds there in a manner sometimes quite shameless.... His work divides into two classes: in the first he is nervously alert, passively, as it were, receiving impressions of personalities and expressing the essentials of them with direct vividness; in the second, an individual suggests an idea to him, and in the expression becomes subservient to the idea; or else the artist has his fantasy and makes the victim fit into it....

"Mr. Kapp is remarkably free.... The nature and character of the subjects suggest the means of expression; they express themselves, as it were, through him. His treatment of subjects is always admirably appropriate ... His best works, such as the drawings of Yoné Noguchi and 'The Bishop' have a delicacy of touch and a subtlety of values which are difficult to reproduce. His wit and humour are probably more easily appreciated than his grasp

of character and his remarkable power of realising the atmosphere of an individual. . . . The portrait of Viscount Morley is an interesting example. . . . The features are full of character, and are drawn apparently without an effort. Note how the form and minute modelling of the chin are suggested by the very simplest means. The drawing of Yoné Noguchi, the Japanese poet, is curiously abstract in feeling, and seems to express a mental atmosphere rather than a definite individual. The form is simplified and intensified at the same time. It is a masterpiece of crystalline expression. . . ."

MR. FRANK RUTTER in the "Sunday Times"
". . . a particularly brilliant collection of caricatures. . . ."

MR. O. RAYMOND DREY in the "Westminster Gazette"
"Captain Edmond X. Kapp was already attracting attention by his contributions to a weekly magazine before the war. . . . If one turns the pages of the illustrated Press one cannot fail to be struck by the infrequency of caricature, and it is no less astonishing to find how few of the caricatures, or, for the matter of that, of the comic drawings in general, are witty in themselves apart from the context. All the more reason, then, have we to welcome Captain Kapp to the select company of Max, Mr. Dulac, Mr. Joseph Simpson and Miss Cameron Bankes, who have hitherto made up to us in quality what the prevailing taste denies us in quantity. . . ."

MR. JAN GORDON in the "Athenæum"
"The caricatures of Captain Edmond X. Kapp have as preface an appreciation by Mr. Max Beerbohm. He could receive no higher compliment. Mr. Kapp's caricatures are, unlike most, without that music-hall bestiality which seems to be the mainspring of so much of our satiric art. He contrives to be *malin* without becoming malicious. His drawings are well designed, humorous, fantastic and critical."

MISS BERNADETTE MURPHY in the "Arts Gazette"
"Foolishly, hitherto, I have expected a caricature to be either very funny or else very cynical, and I have rarely been interested in one that was neither. I find it, therefore, hard to realise the truth—that a caricature is an interpretation of character—of any character, and not necessarily of a character that can be bitterly or comically interpreted. Captain Kapp's exhibition shows how really childish it was of me to labour under such a delusion. . . .
". . . The 'Seer of Visions' is reverently beautiful; with subtlety and dignity the artist has 'interpreted' the extraordinary tranquillity, the aloofness of the Japanese poet. . . ."

"J. S." in "The Observer"
"These cannot be called caricatures in the ordinary sense of the word. The caricature has come to mean a portrait seen by a crude temperament; it is a sort of buffoon amidst the arts. There is none of this obvious vulgarity in Capt. Kapp's work. It is the work not of the buffoon, but of the wit. . . . (Max Beerbohm's) is not too high praise. In these drawings of Kapp the design is as important to the general result as the portraiture. The distortions are deliberate, and no matter how exaggerated they become, this sense of deliberation keeps each, in spite of its fantasy, incredibly real. . . . (These portraits) are revelations more valuable as historical records than many on laboured canvas."

"The World"
"There have not been many caricaturists in England who have combined the pleasures of pictorial exaggeration with that knack of social insight and knowledge of character which make the work of the few really great caricaturists so delightful. . . . A new artist of this character and cunning has arisen . . . a remarkable collection of highly original and witty drawings . . . all instinct with true analytic humour."

"Weekly Dispatch"
"Can caricatures be beautiful? . . . (Kapp's drawings) . . . are sometimes kind and sometimes cruel, but every one is a fine pattern finely placed within its frame."

"The Connoisseur"
". . . an appreciation of the powers of black and white, added to facile draughtsmanship and a sense of humour, have carried him far. . . . A forcible fantasy of two ecstasising musicians, entitled 'The Exquisite Hour,' formed a striking comparison to a serious study of Miss Muriel Pratt, which showed that 'Kapp' can turn his hand to more 'legitimate' art if he has a mind to do so."

"The Manchester Guardian"
". . . I do not know if these celebrities have these qualities, but Mr. Kapp convinces you that he has seen them somehow. . . . Mr. Kapp is undoubtedly one of our few caricaturists—but any praise after what Mr. Beerbohm has said would be superfluous."

"The Daily Chronicle"
". . . We were amazed at the array of celebrities whom he has exposed with fearless cruelty (*sic*). . . . What we admire is the simplicity and strength of his drawing and the humour of his characterisation."

"The Daily Express"
". . . Captain Kapp's caricatures are as refreshing as a whiff of ozone, and have a decorative quality which is as delightful as it is rare in caricature. . . ."

"The Daily News"
"One of the most brilliant and promising young artists of the day."

"The Glasgow Herald"
"It really is time that some to-the-point word superseded 'caricature' to designate art of this genre . . . these glancing, tenuous, elusive characterisations. . . . Mr. Kapp is as an artist, at his best when at his subtlest. . . . ('Seer of Visions') . . . of caricature, in the ordinary or even extraordinary sense, nothing is here, but a glimpse of the essential life of a remote and vivid soul . . . an extraordinarily keen eye for the essential, both in manner and matter."

"The Bystander"
". . . inimitable caricatures of prominent men."

"The Times of India"
". . . brilliantly witty caricatures of quite exceptional refinement and point. His drawings . . . are masterly."

"The Nieuwe Courant" (The Hague, Holland)
". . . a highly gifted caricaturist, from whom much is to be expected . . . his caricatures are at the same time real works of art. . . ."

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2 *Carmelite Street London E.C*
for Edmond X. Kapp
in the year 1919